

AOT In Action - Issue 278 - August 24, 2009



Grapes at Callaghan Vineyards, Sonoita

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## Message from Director Sherry Henry

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Good morning,

As you may have already heard, Arthur Frommer, world-renowned travel expert who founded the well-regarded publication, *Frommer's Travel Guide*, blogged that he will not be traveling to Arizona any time soon due to a demonstration by protesters openly carrying firearms - an action that is legal in Arizona - near the Phoenix Convention Center where President Barack Obama was addressing the Veterans of Foreign Wars convention. Although he hasn't called for a boycott, he did strongly suggest that travelers to Arizona should think twice before visiting the Grand Canyon State.

Mr. Frommer is surely entitled to his opinion; however it is unfortunate that someone who has built his career supporting the tourism industry would allow his personal and political feelings to become a rallying cry against Arizona tourism. Although the issue of gun ownership laws is at the center of Mr. Frommer's opinion, it has nothing to do with tourism in Arizona.

There are 10 other states that have similar gun laws to Arizona and to be singled out by Mr. Frommer is unfair and unfortunate. Comments like Mr. Frommer's do not affect gun owners or gun ownership laws. They affect the housekeepers, restaurant workers, hotel clerks, tour operators and thousands of others at hotels, restaurants and attractions around the state that rely on the tourism industry.

I spoke with Mr. Frommer last Friday to discuss the issue. Suffice to say, he is passionate about gun control laws. I expressed my disappointment with his blog and encouraged him to be aware of his influence and potential negative impact on our tourism industry. I suggested he be more responsible in supporting tourism in our state and reminded him that the tourism industry in Arizona has supported the Frommer's publications for years.

As many of you know, I'm optimistic by nature and firmly believe that every cloud has a silver lining. So let's focus on the positive of this situation. President Obama came to Arizona on a family vacation and to attend a convention. If that's not a testimony to the fact that Arizona is a

desirable tourism destination and a great place to hold conventions I don't know what this!

We'll continue to work in partnership with the city of Phoenix, the Greater Phoenix Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Arizona Hotel & Lodging Association, the Arizona Restaurant Association and many of our other industry partners to monitor this situation and take further action if necessary.

Have a great week!

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### AOT News

#### **Reminder from Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport**

The airport has had increasing issues with visitors arriving without rental car reservations. Please remind our visitors about how important it is to reserve in advance so the rental companies can be sure to have a car ready for their visit!

#### **Don't Forget to Keep Posting Your Summer Travel Deals!**

AOT, in partnership with the Arizona Hotel & Lodging Association and statewide industry partners, launched our new summer campaign which will run through September. The campaign will showcase the amazing summer travel deals found throughout Arizona. If you want your travel deal promoted, this is your chance! Upload your travel deals and packages to the Travel Deals section of [www.azot.gov](http://www.azot.gov). There is no charge to list a package on the Travel Deals section.

If you are experiencing issues with uploading your travel deals or have any questions about the process, please contact Johnny Muongpack at 602-364-3710 or via e-mail at [amuongpack@azot.gov](mailto:amuongpack@azot.gov).

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### Upcoming Events & Activities

#### **Mexico Sales Mission**

Dates: August 31 - September 4

Location: Morelia, San Luis Potosi, Aguascalientes and Zacatecas

#### **Allegiant Airlines Sales Mission**

Date: September 7-11

Location: Bend, Eugene and Medford, Oregon

#### **New York Media Marketplace**

Date: September 10

Location: New York, New York

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### Industry News

**A Message from Roger Dow, President of U.S. Travel Association: Travel Promotion Act**

**Passage Depends on You!**

Your Senators and Representatives are home until Labor Day to work in their district offices. During this time, it is critical that they hear from you about the role of travel in improving the U.S. economy. Most importantly, they need to hear about the urgent need to pass the Travel Promotion Act (S. 1023/H.R. 2935) in both the Senate and House. >> [Read Full Article](#)

**Airline Industry Sees Pain Beyond Recession**

The recession may have bottomed out, but big U.S. airlines worry that things will never return to the way they were. They may be correct, says The Wall Street Journal. >> [Read Full Article](#)

**Visits to National Parks Rise**

The Obama administration says visits to national parks are up nearly 4 percent this year. The National Park Service said Monday that 127.7 million visits were made to national parks in the first six months of the year, an increase of about 4.5 million over the same period in 2008. >> [Read Full Article](#)

**Labor Day Air Travel Will Fall 3.5%, Says ATA**

U.S. airlines will carry 16 million passengers during the eight-day Labor Day holiday period, as the global recession trims demand, the Air Transport Association said Monday. >> [Read Full Article](#)

**Hertz to use Photo Scanning to Stem Damage Losses**

Hertz Global Holdings is testing photographic equipment that will scan its vehicles for dings and dents before and after a rental to boost damage payments and save time. >> [Read Full Article](#)

**Southwest, UAL Cut Fares**

Southwest Airlines cut fares through early January and United Airlines rolled out some last-minute Labor Day weekend discounts, giving the soft fall travel market "its first jolt of stimulus," a veteran fare watcher said. >> [Read Full Article](#)

**IATA Sees Some Stabilization in Air Traffic Demand**

Passenger travel numbers in June are now indicating there is some stabilization in air travel demand, with the decline in total passenger numbers on international markets from levels in the same month last year slowing from 9.2 percent in May to 7.1 percent in June, according to the latest statistics from the International Air Transport Association. >> [Read Full Article](#)

**Most Buyers See Spending Flat or Rising Next Year**

Most corporate travel buyers expect their company's travel spending to increase or stay the same next year compared with 2009, according to a survey conducted in late July and early August by Topaz International. >> [Read Full Article](#)

**Lodging Econometrics Revises Forecast for Hotel Openings**

New U.S. hotel openings for 2011 are projected at 759 hotels and 74,493 rooms, according to a new forecast released by Lodging Econometrics. >> [Read Full Article](#)

**Two Arizona Indian Country Roads Celebrated in National Geographic Publication**

Two Arizona Indian Country roads were listed in the September National Geographic Traveler "World's 50 Drives of a Lifetime." >> [Read Full Article](#)

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**Calendar of Events**

Visit [www.ArizonaGuide.com](http://www.ArizonaGuide.com) to find information on all the exciting events, festivals and activities held throughout the Grand Canyon State!

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